by DOUG MOENCH and TOM MANDRAKE

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# BATMAN

MANDRAKE

How will THE DARK KNIGHT end?

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF DETECTIVE, WE WITNESSED A LOVE KILLING.

IS THAT YOU, JIM?

"JIM"--?

ISN'T PRECIOUS GEORGE ENOUGH FOR YOU?!

OR HAVE YOU ALREADY THROWN GEORGE *ASIDE*--JUST LIKE YOU THREW ME ASIDE?!

NO... OH, NO...!

THERE WAS NO WAY THE VICTIM COULD BE POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED.

SEE FOR YOURSELF, BATMAN--HERE COMES THE *BODY*...

...AND NOTHIN' ELSE.

THE APARTMENT HAD BEEN SHARED BY NANCY CAMPBELL AND MONA LAMONT, TWO FLIGHT ATTENDANTS OF THE SAME BODY TYPE.

THE CORPSE HAD BEEN FOUND BY JIM ZWAITEK, ARRIVING FOR HIS DATE WITH NANCY, BUT--

IT *CAN'T* BE NANCY! I'D *KNOW* IF SHE WERE DEAD!

IT CAN'T BE HER!

RETURNING FROM THE AIRPORT, CATWOMAN PROVED--

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--THAT HE WAS RIGHT.

NANCY--YOU'RE ALIVE!

WHAT THE--?

SO THEN THEY HAD TO INFORM NORA LAMONT'S BOYFRIEND.

--HOWEVER, AS NORA ROSEMARY FLAME, ACE SPIVEY.

I HAD NOTHIN' TO DO WITH IT-- AND YOU'D BETTER STOP HARASSING ME AT WORK!

NANCY HAD SWITCHED FLIGHT ASSIGNMENTS WITH HER ROOMMATE NORA, WHO HAD COME DOWN WITH A HEAD COLD.

BARELY ABLE TO TALK, GEORGE MICHAELS SENT THEM TO GOTHAM CHEMICALS--

DURING THE ENSUING ROOFTOP STAKEOUT ACROSS THE STREET--

...UNTIL SHE FINALLY LEFT HIM TO HIS OBSESSION--

ADVICE TAKEN, THE BATMAN TOSSED SPIVEY'S APARTMENT.

NO EYE, NO HEAD.

NOTHING BUT PHOTOS-- ALL HEAD SHOTS OF NORA.

--THE RIFT BETWEEN BATMAN AND CATWOMAN GREW WIDER...

...ACTUALLY THERE WAS A "NEW FRIEND" IN HER LIFE.

CONVINCED OF SPIVEY'S GUILT, THE BATMAN CONTINUED HIS LONE STAKEOUT FOR A MONTH, HAUNTED BY THE MURDER OF ONE LOVE (NORA) AND THE SLOW FADE OF ANOTHER (CATWOMAN).

CREEPING THROUGH THE BASEMENT TOWARD A BUCKET PLACED BEHIND THE FURNACE WEEKS PAST.

WHAT IS SPIVEY DOING IN THERE?

SHE'LL BE READY TO TALK BY NOW-- BUT SHE'LL NEVER LIE TO ME AGAIN...

YOU SAID YOU LOVE ME, MONA--YOU LIED!

AND YOU WONDER WHY I HATE YOUR FACE!

BUT NOW WE'LL SEE HOW HE LIKES IT!

# BAT MAN

# STRIKE TWO!

DOUG MOENCH ★ TOM MANDRAKE ★ ALBERT T. DE GUZMAN ★ ADRIENNE ROY ★ LEN WEIN
WRITER ARTIST LETTERER COLORIST EDITOR

AND NOW: THE STAKEOUT ENTERS ITS SECOND MONTH... AS DOES THE HAUNTING.

SPIVEY MUST BE INSANE... BUT WHEN WILL HE BREAK!

CATWOMAN MUST HAVE SOMEONE NEW... BUT WHO COULD IT BE!

ACROSS TOWN, IN THE PARK:

THAT WAS GOOD, LOVER... VERY GOOD.

NOW LET'S TRY IT AGAIN--ROUGHER THIS TIME.

I KNOW HE'S GUILTY.

SHE'S SO COLD TO ME.

HMM...

RAHRRR

...MAYBE A LITTLE TOO ROUGH.

STILL, YOU'RE JUST ABOUT READY TO HIT THE NIGHT WITH ME FOR REAL, LOVER... ONCE I BLUNT YOUR CLAWS, ANYWAY.

UHRRR

AND, AT YET ANOTHER BLEAK DAWN:

THERE HE GOES AGAIN, ON HIS WAY TO WORK WITH NOTHING LARGER THAN A LUNCHBOX...

...JUST LIKE EVERY DAY FOR A MONTH.

THE WAY HE HIRED THAT THUG TO JUMP ME...

THE WAY SHE CAN BARELY STAND TO TOUCH ME...



CONTINUED ON 3RD PAGE FOLLOWING

BOX IS FAR TOO SMALL FOR AN AXE OR A HEAD...

ZIPPETY-DOO-DAH, ZIPPETY-AY...

BESIDES, I TOSSED HIS PLACE AND FOUND NOTHING.

MAYBE HE HID IT SOMEWHERE, BUT DIDN'T DITCH IT FOR GOOD... NOT RIGHT AWAY, ANYWAY.

--THERE MAY BE TEETH IN THE FURNACE ASH-GRATE...

BUT WHY WOULD HE TAKE SUCH A GRISLY TROPHY IN THE FIRST PLACE IF HE DIDN'T WANT IT FOR SOME REASON?

IT'S A LONG SHOT, BUT IF HE HAS BURNED THE EVIDENCE BY NOW--

...PROVIDED THIS BUILDING'S STILL GOT AN OLD COAL-BURNER, THAT IS.

STUPID BATMAN-- DOESN'T THINK I KNOW HE'S BEEN WATCHING ME FOR A MONTH...

...EVEN AFTER HE PUT AWAY TONY WHEN I HIRED HIS MUSCLE...

...BUT NO WAY I LET IT STOP ME.

THE LUNCH PAIL CONTAINS NO FOOD.

JUST A PACKAGE--BARELY SMALL ENOUGH TO FIT INTO THE MAILBOX.

SO I EAT CAFETERIA SWILL TODAY... BUT FIRST, ONE MORE STOP BEFORE HEADING TO WORK...

THE BASEMENT! IT IS AN OLD-FASHIONED FURNACE, BUT--

NO TEETH IN THE GRATE... NOTHING BUT--

WAIT A MINUTE!

A BRASS BUTTON-- VERY POSSIBLY OF THE TYPE FOUND ON FLIGHT ATTENDANT UNIFORMS...

...AND MONA'S STEW JACKET WAS MISSING FROM THE CRIME SCENE.

THERE'S NO DOUBT NOW-- SPIVEY'S GUILTY AS SIN, EVEN IF IT WON'T STAND UP IN COURT OR--

HE FREEZES, NOSTRILS FLARING.

THE SCENT OF SOMETHING BITTER, PUNGENT...

...BEHIND THE FURNACE.

DROPPING TO A CROUCH, HE EXTRACTS A SMALL VIAL FROM HIS UTILITY BELT.

LAST STOP.

BAR

BAR

HARDWARE

BOB LIGHT

HELP YOU, SIR?

SALE

SPANNERS HARDWARE

YEAH-- I NEED AN AXE.

NIGHT.

WAYNE MANOR.

AND IN THE DANK CAVERN BELOW, WHERE THE BATMAN HAS WORKED ALL DAY...

GOT IT-- FINALLY ANALYZED THE CHEMICAL SAMPLE.

IT HAS INDUSTRIAL USES...

...BUT IT'S ALSO EXTREMELY SIMILAR TO A NATURAL PLANT DERIVATIVE INDIGENOUS TO SOUTH AMERICA.

NO WAY TO PROVE IT WAS SPIVEY WHO PUT IT BEHIND THE FURNACE... EVEN THOUGH HE WORKS AT A CHEMICAL PLANT...

STILL, HE'S ALREADY MADE TWO MISTAKES-- THE BUTTONS AND THE CHEMICAL-- AND SOONER OR LATER HE'LL MAKE ANOTHER.

NOTHING TO DO BUT RETURN TO MY STAKEOUT ROOF AND WAIT FOR IT.

I'VE ALREADY MISSED TAILING HIM HOME FROM WORK TONIGHT...

LATE THE NEXT AFTERNOON, JIM ZWAITEK RETURNS HOME FROM WORK, THINKING AHEAD TO THE EVENING'S DATE WITH NANCY CAMPBELL, AND SCARCELY NOTICING THE DOORMAN...

FIRST-CLASS PACKAGE FOR YOU TODAY, MR. ZWAITEK.

I LEFT IT BY YOUR DOOR.

OH? THANKS, MYRON.

NO RETURN ADDRESS...

WONDER WHAT IT COULD BE?

OPENING THE PACKAGE AS HE ENTERS HIS APARTMENT, JIM ZWAITEK'S CURIOSITY GIVES WAY TO CONFUSION AND DISMAY...

NOW YOU CAN STARE AT HER LYING FACE

WHAT THE--?

THEN HE LIFTS THE NOTE.

AAAAA

AN HOUR LATER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS:

THIS IS THE PACKAGE SENT TO ZWAITEK, BATMAN, BUT THE WRAPPING PAPER DIDN'T TAKE ANY *PRINTS*...

NEVER *DOES*-- 'CEPT IN THE *MOVIES*.

NHN.

AND THE *PUDDLE* I FOUND BEHIND THE *FURNACE*--A CHEMICAL SIMILAR TO THAT USED BY *JIVARO HEADHUNTERS*.

SPIVEY'S GUILT IS *CERTAIN*.

EXCEPT FOR ONE THING...

IF THE MOTIVE'S *JILTED JEALOUSY*, WHY'D HE SEND THE SHRUNKEN HEAD TO THIS *ZWAITEK* GUY?

8

CONTINUED ON 3RD FACE FOLLOWING

NO, I... I HAVE NO IDEA WHO'D WANT TO SEND ME... SUCH A THING...

HIS GIRLFRIEND IS THE VICTIM'S ROOMIE--NANCY CAMPBELL.

POLICE COMMISSIONER

SO IF YOUR TAKE IS RIGHT, BATMAN, HE SHOULD'A SENT IT TO THE VICTIM'S NEW BOYFRIEND--GEORGE MICHAELS--THE GUY SHE DUMPED SPIVEY FOR.

POLICE COMMISSIONER

MEANING WHAT, BULLOCK?

MAYBE THE KILLER AIN'T SPIVEY, COMMISH. REMEMBER HOW WE GOT THE TWO GIRLS MIXED UP WHEN THEY SWITCHED FLIGHTS--HOW WE FIRST THOUGHT THE VICTIM WAS NANCY CAMPBELL INSTEAD O'MONA LAMONT?

WELL, MAYBE THE KILLER MADE THE SAME MISTAKE--AND THOUGHT HE WAS KILLIN' NANCY INSTEAD O' MONA.

IN WHICH SCENARIO, HE COULDN'T HAVE KNOWN EITHER GIRL--OR READ THE PAPERS THE LAST MONTH.

A HIRED HIT THAT WENT WRONG.

NO--IT'S SPIVEY. I KNOW IT

YOU MEAN... YOU THINK MONA WAS FOOLIN' AROUND WITH ZWAITEK TOO--WITH HER OWN ROOMIE'S BOYFRIEND--ON TOP O' GEORGE MICHAELS?

DOESN'T MATTER WHAT I THINK, BULLOCK.

AND THE MOTIVE IS JUST WHAT I SAY--TWISTED LOVE... JEALOUSY.

ONLY SPIVEY HAD TO THINK IT--AND HE'S INSANE ENOUGH TO CONCEIVE ANYTHING.

NOW LET ME ASK YOU A QUESTION — HAVE YOU TOLD GEORGE MCFOLD ABOUT THE SHRUNKEN HEAD YET?

ALL RIGHT — [illegible] COMING OVER TO [illegible]'S PLACE TOMORROW [illegible] — WE DON'T THINK WE SHOULD BE ALONE ALL THE TIME

STILL, BATMAN, IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO PICK SIDES UP

ENOUGH FOR A TWO-JAKE

I WASN'T BE ABLE TO HANDLE THIS

THANKS — I'LL WANT TO USE IN CASE

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

YOUR MONEY BOUGHT THIS BUILDING AND PAID FOR THE [illegible]...

I STILL HAVEN'T MADE UP MY MIND ABOUT RUNNING FOR MAYOR, BUT IF I DECIDE TO [illegible] REPLACEMENT?

...BUT IT WON'T BUY YOU LOVE OR FRIENDSHIP...

...OR THE RESPECT OF YOUR FELLOW MEN.

I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT THE MAYOR IS NOT TO BE DISTURBED.

I'LL BE [illegible]

[illegible]

SHE SAYS HELLO AND THE WORD IS A KNIFE TWISTING IN HIS GUT.

SELINA, I... I GUESS WE HAVEN'T DRIFTED ANY CLOSER THIS PAST MONTH, HAVE WE?

NO... WE HAVEN'T.

UH HUH

HIS VOICE, FOR HER, HAS A LESS SAVAGE EFFECT MAKING THE PAIN SHARPER.

SO... HOW'S YOUR... NEW FRIEND?

HE'S, UH... HE'S WORKING OUT QUITE WELL, ACTUALLY.

I... SEE.

HE STILL CAN'T BELIEVE IT CAN'T BEAR THE REALITY OF LOSING HER

WELL I STEN... I NEED Y--

I NEED SOME HELP

I'M STILL ON THE SPIVEY CASE -- STILL OBSESSED, AS YOU PUT IT...

COULD YOU PERHAPS, WATCH OVER ZWAITEK, SELINA...?

SHE STILL CAN'T FATHOM WHAT'S DRIVING HER TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN, TO MAKE IT REAL.

AND THE NEXT TIME HE LEAVES HIS PLACE I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING OTHER THAN TAIL HIM.

ALSO, EVEN THOUGH I DON'T THINK SPIVEY IS CRAZY ENOUGH TO STRIKE TWICE, IT COULD BE THAT JIM ZWAITEK IS IN DANGER.

JUST FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE?

BUT NOW I KNOW SHE CANNOT [illegible] SO I'LL ONLY MAKE IT HARDER

OF COURSE, BATMAN.

FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE... AND MUCH MORE

THE DARKER SIDE OF NIGHT

IF HE'S *HUNGRY*, IT SHOULD GIVE ME ENOUGH TIME TO BUG HIM RIGHT OVER THE EDGE-- AND INTO *PRISON.*

PREPARE GOING OUT TO DINNER

YOU HAVEN'T *TOUCHED* YOUR FOOD, GEORGE.

MM WHAT DO YOU *MEAN*, GEORGE?

MONA'S *DEAD*, DAMMIT!

AND HER KILLER'S STILL OUT THERE *FREE*!

IT'S NOT *RIGHT*! I *DEMAND* JUSTICE!

IT'S NOT THE SPAGHETTI, NANCY, BELIEVE ME--BUT THIS... THIS SICK "*GIFT*" SENT TO JIM... I DON'T THINK I CAN TAKE IT..

EASY, GEORGE...

EASY *NOTHING*! I'M GOING TO *CONFRONT* SPIVEY! RIGHT *NOW*!

WELL, THEY CAN'T GET JUST CE I CAN!

GEORGE, I WON'T LET YOU-

YOU *SAID* BATMAN AND THE POLICE *KNOW* HE'S GUILTY!

TRY TO STOP ME, JIM--

AND I'LL BLOW YOUR HEAD OFF!

I CAN'T LET HIM GO OFF *ALONE*, NANCY!

LOCK THE DOOR UNTIL I GET BACK!

KENNEDY AS HE IS, ROY GETNEY PEERS NOT FOR FOOD.

ONLY TWO PEOPLE COULD'VE TOLD BATMAN ABOUT ME...

...AND NOW I'LL HAVE...

BANG BANG BANG

TWO...

HELLO? OPERATOR--?

HELLO!

I'VE GOT THIS GUY

YOU'RE A LOT LIKE MOMA.

I'M JUST

AND I BET YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TOLD BATMAN ABOUT M--

BLAM!

THAT'S THE LAST PLANT IN PLACE...

TIME TO GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE--

UH? FOOTSTEPS OUT IN THE HALL--HARD AND FAST...

...COMING CLOSER.

HE CAME INTO THE CLOSET--

NOT QUITE I CAN'T WATCH IT THE BATMAN'S PLANNED. BULLOCK...

AN' WHAT'S THAT, COMMISH?

I HEARD YOU

I HEARD YOU

AND I... I NEVER WANT TO...

ALL RIGHT, GRIVEY-- YOU'VE SAID ENOUGH

WHAAAAA?!

...SEE YOU... AGAIN... NEVER WANT TO-

THE BANG!!

TIME TO PUT DOWN THE AXE AND GO SEE THE POLICE, GRIVEY..

STAY BACK!

STAY BACK OR I'LL--

BAM

--KILL YOU!!

OH -?

PLEASE, GEORGE-- WE CAN'T DO THIS!

BAMP BAMP BAMP

IT'S A MATTER FOR BATMAN OR THE POLICE!

JUST SHUT UP, JIM! I'M NOT LEAVING UNTIL SPIVEY--

"--COMES OUT!"

WUMP

UHNF!!

STAY HERE-- BOTH OF YOU!

Y-YOU... S-SEE, GEORGE...?

I...I TOLD YOU BATMAN WOULD TAKE CARE OF IT...

H-HE'S STILL AFTER ME!

I CHOPPED HIM--BUT HE'S STILL COMING!

GOTTA GET AWAY!

EVENING, MR. SPIVEY.

GOING SOMEWHERE?

SH-TRAKT

THROKK

OTHER THAN THAT NASTY NOTCH IN YOUR SHOULDER... FINALLY GET WHAT YOU WANT?

ON TAPE, EVERYTHING I NEED TO PUT SPIVEY AWAY--

--BUT ONLY HALF OF WHAT I WANT.

NOW, ABOUT THOSE CLAW MARKS ON HIS FACE, SELINA...

I FOLLOWED IWAITEK TO HER PLACE-- BUT WHEN HE LEFT WITH GEORGE MICHAELS, I DIDN'T LIKE THE IDEA OF LEAVING NANCY ALONE...

AND MY PLACE?

NO ONE COULD EVER TAKE THAT.

APPARENTLY, HE WENT AFTER NANCY CAMPBELL, BATMAN.

... SO I LEFT MY NEW FRIEND TO GUARD HER -- A PANTHER, TO TAKE DIABLO'S PLACE.

BUT STILL, SHE LEAVES.



CONTINUED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

EPILOGUE: MONA LAMONT IS DEAD.

THE LIVING SAY THEIR GOOD-BYES.

I COULDN'T JUST UP AND SPLIT LIKE THAT, FRIEND...

... NOT WITHOUT SAYING GOOD-BYE.

IT MAY NOT BE FOR THE BEST...

... BUT MY GUESS IS... IT'LL BE A KISS TO REMEMBER.

AND THE PANTHER'S GROWL... IS SOFT.

TWO LOVES HAVE DIED.

ASHES TO ASHES...

THE HAUNTING HAS ONLY BEGUN.

THE BATCAVE.

HE AVOIDS THE CAT-SHAPED STALAGMITE, SEEKING THE SHADOW OF LINCOLN...

LIBERTY

TA DAA!

THE BOY WONDER IS BACK!

AND IF HIS SMILE IS CROOKED--

-- AT LEAST A SMILE IT IS.

Y'SEE, BOSS, I DECIDED I'VE BEEN NEGLECTING MY ROBIN DUTIES--

--AND FOR A LOUSY REASON, TOO.

JEALOUSY.

BUT NOW THAT I LOVE RENA ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND WHAT LOVE'S ALL ABOUT, I CAN SEE HOW DUMB I'VE BEEN.

SO YOUR PARTNER'S RIGHT BACK WHERE HE BELONGS, BOSS--

--AND I'LL EVEN UNDERSTAND IF THE CAT-LADY IS AT YOUR OTHER SIDE.

BUT I MAY NEVER UNDERSTAND... WHY SHE'S NOT.

HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN--?

LATER, SON.

RIGHT NOW... JUST... TALK TO ME.

ADVICE TO BATMAN IN DETECTIVE #566: KNOW YOUR FOES! AND IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF BATMAN: RESURRECTION NIGHT -- A VERY SPECIAL 400TH ANNIVERSARY BLOCKBUSTER!